

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1           1.     A container for holding cosmetics and having a cover and a  
2     base, the container comprising:  
3                 a hinge assembly having a spring and coupling the cover to the  
4     base and configured for pivoting the cover from a closed position in which the  
5     cosmetics are concealed to an opened position relative to the base in which  
6     the cosmetics are revealed;  
7                 wherein the spring is tensioned when the cover is in the closed  
8     position and the spring is at least partially relaxed when the cover is in the  
9     opened position.

1           2.     The container of Claim 1 wherein one end of the spring is  
2     coupled to the cover and the other end of the spring is coupled to the base.

1           3.     The container of Claim 2 wherein the spring is a coil spring  
2     configured for unwinding as the cover is pivoted from the closed position to  
3     the opened position.

1           4.     The container of Claim 3 further comprising a lock for selectively  
2     releasing the cover relative to the base.

1           5.     The container of Claim 4 further comprising a user interface  
2     configured for disengaging the lock so that the cover automatically pivots from  
3     the closed position to the opened position.

1           6.     The container of Claim 3 further comprising a detent coupled to  
2     at least one of the cover and the base to limit the range the cover pivots from  
3     the closed position to the opened position.

1           7.     The container of Claim 6 wherein the cover is configured to pivot  
2     less than about 120 degrees relative to the base.

1           8.     The container of Claim 7 wherein the cover is pivoted from the  
2     closed position to the opened position at a rate of less than about 120  
3     degrees per second.

1           9.     The container of Claim 6 further comprising a plug attached to  
2     one end of the spring to fix the end of the spring relative to the base.

1           10.    The container of Claim 9 further comprising a damper assembly.

1           11.    The container of Claim 10 wherein the damper assembly  
2     comprises a plug.

1           12.    The container of Claim 11 wherein the damper assembly  
2     comprises a viscous fluid.

1           13.    The container of Claim 12 wherein the viscous fluid comprises a  
2     grease.

1           14.    The container of Claim 12 wherein the viscous fluid is tacky.

1           15.    The container of Claim 14 wherein frictional engagement  
2     between the plug and the cover limits the rate at which the cover pivots  
3     relative to the base.

1           16.    The container of claim 15 wherein the spring is encapsulated in  
2     a cartridge and the cartridge is configured to rotate about the plug.

1           17.    The container of Claim 16 wherein a display is revealed when  
2     the cover is in the opened position.

1           18.    The container of Claim 17 wherein the cover in the opened  
2     position is pivoted at least 60 degrees relative to the base

1            19.    A container for holding cosmetics and having a cover and a  
2 base, the container comprising:  
3                    a hinge assembly having a spring and coupling the cover to the  
4 base and configured for pivoting the cover from a storage position to a use  
5 position relative to the base;  
6                    a damper assembly coupled to the hinge assembly and  
7 configured to limit pivoting of the cover at rate of about 60 to 120 degrees per  
8 second;  
9                    wherein the spring is in a tensioned configuration when the  
10 cover is in the storage position and the spring is in an at least partially relaxed  
11 configuration when the cover is in the use position.

1            20.    The container of Claim 19 wherein one end of the spring is fixed  
2 relative to the base and the other end of the spring is fixed relative to the  
3 cover.

1            21.    The container of Claim 20 wherein the spring is a coil spring  
2 configured to unwind when the cover is pivoted from the storage position to  
3 the use position.

1            22.    The container of Claim 21 further comprising a lock for  
2 selectively releasing the cover from the base.

1            23.    The container of Claim 22 further comprising a stopper coupled  
2 to the cover to limit the range the cover pivots from the storage position to the  
3 use position.

1            24.    The container of Claim 23 wherein the damper assembly  
2 comprises a plug attached to one end of the spring to fix the spring relative to  
3 the base.

1            25.    The container of Claim 24 wherein the damper assembly  
2 comprises a viscous fluid.

1           26.    The container of Claim 25 wherein the viscous fluid comprises a  
2   grease.

1           27.    The container of Claim 26 wherein the viscous fluid is tacky.

1           28.    The container of Claim 26 wherein frictional engagement  
2   between the plug and the cover limits the rate at which the cover pivots  
3   relative to the base.

1           29.    The container of Claim 28 further comprising a cartridge coupled  
2   to the damper assembly..

1           30.    The container of Claim 29 wherein the spring is encapsulated in  
2   a cartridge.

1           31.    The container of Claim 30 wherein the cartridge is configured to  
2   rotate about the plug.

1           32.    A method for assembling a container for holding cosmetics and  
2   having a cover and a base including a hinge assembly having a spring and  
3   coupling the cover to the base and configured for pivoting the cover from a  
4   closed position to a threshold opened position relative to the base, the method  
5   comprising:

6                   coupling the cover to the base so that the spring is unloaded;  
7                   pivoting the cover toward the base to a position less than the  
8   threshold opened position, thereby loading the spring;

9                   wherein the spring is in a tensioned configuration when the  
10   cover is in the closed position and the spring is in an at least partially relaxed  
11   configuration when the cover is in the threshold opened position.

1           33.    The method of Claim 32 further comprising inserting the spring  
2   into the hinge assembly.

1           34.    The method of Claim 33 further comprising preloading the spring  
2   into a cartridge and inserting the cartridge into the hinge assembly.

1           35.    The method of Claim 34 further comprising locking the cover in  
2   the closed position.

1           36.    The method of Claim 35 further comprising unlocking the cover  
2   so that the cover automatically pivots to the opened position.

1           37.    A container for holding cosmetics and having a first platform and  
2   a second platform, the container comprising:

3                   hinge means for coupling the first platform and a second  
4   platform and for automatically pivoting the first platform from a storage  
5   position to a use position relative to the second platform;

6                   damper means for limiting pivoting of the cover at rate of about  
7   60 to 120 degrees per second;

8                   wherein the first platform in the storage position conceals the  
9   cosmetics and the first platform in the use position reveals the cosmetics.

1           38.    The container of Claim 37 wherein the hinge means comprises a  
2   spring

1           39.    The container of Claim 38 wherein the spring is in a tensioned  
2   configuration when the cover is in the storage position and the spring is in an  
3   at least partially relaxed configuration when the cover is in the use position.

1           40.    The container of Claim 39 wherein the damper means  
2   comprises a plug.

1           41.    The container of Claim 40 wherein the damper means  
2   comprises a viscous fluid.